

The annual meeting of the Congo Inland Mission Board was held in the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana, May 26-27, 1929.

The meeting was called to order by the President at 1:10 P. M. Rev. Eash and Rev. Smucker were called upon to lead in prayer.

The President called upon Rev. A. M. Eash, who had spent eight months in the Congo in the study of Missions to give his report, which occupied the afternoon and evening sessions. At the close of his report it was moved by Rev. Detwiler, seconded by Brother Gerig that we accept with thanks to Brother Eash this splendid and detailed report. Motion carried unanimously.

In discussing the manner of procedure with recommendations to the Missionaries and the Board, it was moved by Brother Oyer, seconded by Brother Smucker, that the Executive Committee, including Brother Eash be appointed to formulate a program of procedure for the following day's sessions. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn, and meeting stood adjourned to meet the following morning at 8:00 A. M.

MORNING SESSION
May 28, 1929
8:00 A.M.

The meeting was opened with prayer.

The chair called for the reading of the minutes of the last annual meeting. Minutes stood approved as read.

The minutes of the executive meetings were then read, and upon motion by Brother Yoder, seconded by Brother Oyer, the minutes of the Executive meetings were adopted and became a part of the record of the Board. Motion carried.

1. Recommendation was made for creating a larger constituency, in order to be able to enter the unoccupied tribes.

Moved by Detwiler, seconded by Yoder that Brother Eash be employed for the next six months as Field Secretary to create a deeper spirit and interest in missions in our Churches, and a larger constituency to support the work. Motion carried.

Motion by Brother Detwiler, seconded by Brother Smucker that a committee be appointed by the chair to confer with the Home Mission Committee of the Central Conference of Mennonites, relative to the amount of time Brother Eash is expected to give to the C. I. M., and adjustments of allowance. Motion carried.

2. The recommendation of a Missionary Magazine.

Motion by Brother Yoder, seconded by Brother Weaver that we publish and maintain a missionary paper. Motion carried.

Motion by Brother Weaver, seconded by Brother Gerig that the Executive Committee with Brother Eash, work out the plan of launching this paper. Motion carried.

3. Recommendations of sending more Missionaries. More workers needed.

Office man, Printer, Industrial School man, Evangelist for Nyanga, Extension Worker at Kalamba, Industrial Man for Mukedi and a Doctor are workers needed.

Moved by Brother Yoder, seconded by Brother Oyer that the Executive Committee with Brother Eash make the necessary arrangements to send more Missionaries as rapidly as possible. Motion carried.

4. Missionary Expansion, after discussion of the Field.

It was moved by Brother Detwiler, seconded by Brother Gerig that in the light of more positive attitude to Missionary work in the constituency, that we look with favor upon opening work in the Batshoke tribe and expect to open work there within a year. Motion carried.

5. Missionary allowance increase was considered.

Motion by Brother Detwiler, seconded by Brother Maurer that we recommend to the Conferences that the Budget be increased in order that the Missionary allowance be made \$50.00 a year more. Motion carried.

6. More strictly regulated furlough. One trip to come out of furlough year. Furlough to be spent under guidance of Board in preparation.

Moved by Brother Oyer, seconded by Brother Smucker that we accept the above recommendation. Motion carried.

7. Recommendation that new Missionaries have French before they go to the Field.

✓ Moved and seconded that new Missionaries be required to have French before their final acceptance. Motion carried.

Motion to adjourn and meeting stood adjourned to meet at 1:00 P. M.

AFTERNOON SESSION

Meeting called to order by President. Brother Oyer was called upon to lead in prayer.

8. Recommendations to the Missionaries.

Moved by Brother Detwiler, seconded by Brother Oyer that we endorse the recommendations to the Missionaries and that Brother Eash rewrite the same, sending one copy to the Field, also one for the Board for record. Motion carried.

9. Preservation of Rev. Eash's report.

Motion made by Brother Detwiler, seconded by Brother Gerig that there be 10 carbon copies made, so that there be one in the hands of every member of the Board. Motion carried.

10. Library and Museum.

After a general discussion it was moved by Brother Yoder, seconded by Brother Weaver that we adopt the recommendation, and that the chair appoint a Committee to execute the same. Motion carried.

11. Ladies Auxiliary report to the Board, after a general discussion

It was moved by Detwiler, seconded by Gerig that we accept the plan and that it be worked out by the Ladies Aids of the different Conferences. Motion carried.

12. The Budget for the Field. Askings for 1929. Askings for 1930.

Motion by Detwiler, seconded by Oyer that the Budget for 1929 remain the same as it has been. Motion carried.

Motion by Yoder, seconded by Oyer that the Executive Committee including both Treasurers go over these askings for 1930 with Brother Eash with power to act. Motion carried.

Moved by Detwiler, seconded by Oyer that we commend them for their itemized Asking, also for sending same a year in advance. Motion carried.

13. More tract literature and literature for the Missionaries.

Moved that we accept this recommendation and that the responsibility of the promotion of the same be given to committee on Missionary Magazine. Motion carried.

14. Autos for the Stations.

Motion by Yoder, seconded by Smucker that we recommend that each station not now equipped with autos, namely Charlsville and Nyanga be equipped with touring car as soon as money is available. Motion carried.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MISSIONARIES.

1. With my limited connection with our Mission Board and the equally limited experience on the Field, you can well feel that I take large liberties when I presume to say anything that can be construed as even a suggestion of advice. However, I am going to do that thing which must appear so presumptuous. It was my happy privilege to make the brief visits to all of the stations and the missionaries were wonderfully kind in their endeavors to acquaint me as fully as possible with their work. The suggestions which I shall offer are either in the form of questions of recommendations that have impressed themselves on me during these visits and conversations, or as I have sought to make comparisons and contrasts between the work in our several stations and between them and the work of other missions. They are given with the kindest of intentions and with the hope that at least some of them may be in order and timely. Should my limited knowledge and experience cause me to raise questions or make recommendations that are not practical, I am sure the kindness of the missionaries will be sufficiently extended to pardon the unintentional errors.

2. The Recommendations.

a. The conditions under which the missionaries are asked - rather compelled - to live are quite abnormal. In the first place a small number of ~~people~~ people with frequently quite different tastes and earlier environments, find it necessary to live in close contact with each other and learn to know each other intimately. This intimacy uncovers the strength and weakness and the likes and dislikes of the fellow missionaries. The mistakes of their lives become public knowledge. Coupled with this is the abnormal physical and mental state of every missionary due to the climatic conditions, the constant use of quinine and the strain of intense devotion to the daily tasks. If there are to be constant peaceful relationships, then it is extremely necessary that every missionary exercise the utmost caution in his thoughts, observations and criticisms of his fellow missionaries. Harmonious life among the missionaries on a station or in an entire mission is even more essential than the distinct doctrinal beliefs and the teachings given; for after all the natives are studying the conduct of the missionaries more than they give heed to the teachings from their lips.

What I have said above relative to missionaries living on one station is quite as true relative to the groups representing the several stations. It becomes quite as natural for a missionary to feel that his own station is the most important of all as it is for him to feel that his particular work is the most far-reaching on his own station. Particularly have I discovered it to be true that where there are slightly different methods of approach to the natives there is a tendency to feel that the methods of the others are not quite the right ones. Great care needs to be exercised in thinking with appreciation and kindness of all the activities of all the missionaries in all the stations.

There is a third thought in this connection that I feel needs to be expressed. There seems to be a large tendency on the part of missionaries to feel that their own missionary group - the folks who work under their own Board - is just a little better than the missionaries of other Mission Boards. There ought to be constant effort to secure and exercise an appreciative attitude toward all the work of all the missions and to think and speak of them with consideration. I believe it would be very profitable for our own missionaries to make a larger effort to learn from the experiences of other missions in this respect and that there ought to be a very close co-operation with the Conseil Protestant du Congo.

b. This concerns the things that are written home and that are spoken when on furlough. There is a rule of the mission that nothing shall be sent home for publication unless it is first passed upon by a Literature of Censorship Committee. If it were possible to have it so, it would certainly be well if all the things that are spoken or written about the mission or missionaries to the home constituency were said and done as though they were distinctly about the individual himself and his own work. After all, the Mission is a unit and whatever is said or done that harms one individual member or activity of that mission is a harm to the entire cause; and particularly is this true in an activity which depends so largely on the goodwill of the public. Great harm is

often done through the unkind things that are written or spoken. They are intended for some individual person or work but the reflection is on all. Sometimes the criticisms are not so much directed against folks or activities in our own missions but against the work of other Boards. The public in the homeland needs to have a larger interest in and concern for the work of missions. Their goodwill ought always to be cultivated. Even though well meant and sincerely given, The work of criticism of the work of other mission organizations may work a large harm to your own work. There are many who know that the individual who is given to criticising absent persons to them, will likely in turn criticize them to the absent ones. The practise of finding fault has a strange habit of reacting on the fault finder. Would it not be well to be extremely cautious in these things?

Then, also, it has been true of some in the past that they were given to exaggeration, and there was perhaps a day when the public was sufficiently gullible to accept these exaggerations. Why not limit to a statement of facts and then further limit to a report of these things that will make a real contribution to the cause which you are representing? Missionaries may well seal their lips against being gossippers or bearers of evil tales. Let him or her remember that "of my unspoken word I am master, while my spoken word is master of me."

c. It seems unfortunate that in the past missionaries have not been able to get in touch with the work of other missions. If at all possible this condition should be changed. Certainly the buildings of roads and the coming in of more rapid means of travel will make possible an improvement here. I believe that during the first term of service every missionary ought to see the work of all the stations. This will help him or her to think and speak with appreciation of the work being done at those stations. Whatever is said before the public - or even in private - by the missionary on his furlough ought by all means be a fair representation of the entire mission and in no manner a suggestion that reflects. This can only be true as there is a general knowledge of all the stations' work. Then, too, there ought to be an effort made to also visit the work done under other mission Boards. Such a contest might be of aid in bringing in new methods as they are used by those Boards - for there are still many points in which we can learn valuable lessons from others - and it will certainly help our own missionaries to learn that there are many other good folks working in the Belgian Congo. My suggestion here is that every missionary aim to see the work of all the stations in our mission during the first term of service and that, as much as possible, other missions be visited.

d. This recommendation concerns the sanitation on the mission. I should like to urge that persistent effort be made to carry out the conference action relative to improving the sanitation. To that I would add the additional suggestion that as rapidly as possible the buildings occupied by the station boys and girls should be constructed so that there will be better ventilation than is common at present.

Taking into consideration everything that was said during conversations and at the Conference on this subject, I still feel that there is a danger of losing sight of the importance and great need of making some improvements as speedily as possible. While traveling between Bukama and Mwanza (the latter is the main station of the C. E. M.) I had opportunity to discuss these and other problems with Mr. Burton, the director of that mission. He gave me a full description of the plan they have worked out in conjunction with the Government representatives. The plan seems quite simple yet he assures me that it most effectively solves the problem of sanitation on all their mission stations. The following is an effort to pass on to the missionaries the system employed in the C. E. M.

(Diagram below will possibly be of help.)

Two pits are dug the same depth and connected with small opening at the bottom. These pits are sufficiently deep to serve for a reasonable length of time. They dig them from twenty to twenty-five feet deep. The opening at the top of the one - the larger of the two pits - narrows down to a convenient size to be used by the natives as a toilet stool. (a) The other has a larger opening which is covered tightly with iron cover. (b) Daily a quantity of dried grass or leaves (c) is dropped into this second pit and set on fire. This ought to be damp enough to cause a smouldering (d) fire at the bottom of the pit, the smoke from which is drawn up through the toilet pit successfully preventing the gathering of the usual magots found in the toilets. This of course prevents the development of the flies that carry so much contamination about. For a group of natives there can be a series of three or more pits (e) with alternating ones used as toilets and pits for burning the refuse. The C. E. M. has found this a successful system. If the soil does not permit the digging of pits of this depth, it may be possible to build some kind of retaining walls that can be sunk as the pit is being dug. Whatever may be the method employed, it is my firm conviction that there is need for improvement in the sanitation on the mission stations. The experiment which Mr. Amie hopes to try at Nyanga may prove practical and less costly than the plan suggested above.

e. Another practise of the C. E. M. which I believe at least worthy of consideration, is their method of entirely covering the territory which they are occupying, and their supervision of the native workers. They count as territory for a station all the villages that can be easily reached from the station in a two or three days' journey by the natives. Then, considering the center of population, the size of the villages, soil, water and health conditions, they locate the central station. From that central station they send out native teachers by twos and each pair is made responsible for a group of five or six villages, with a school in one and preaching in every one of the others each week. They aim to have work in every village of the field of that station before opening another central station. Each month all the native teachers are brought together at the central station for four days of Conference, Bible study, etc. Every three months every one of these outstations is visited by the missionaries at the central station. Likely scholars from the outstations are brought to the central school for training as teachers and the choice of those are sent on to the main training school at Mwanza. Teachers are, however, also sent out after they have had the teachers training at the station schools, those from the school at Mwanza being delegated for special work of supervision, etc. (Incidentally, the C. E. M. work is fourteen years old, is backed by no Mission Board, gets all the funds needed by telling God their needs, always has plenty of money to pay each missionary what they consider reasonable wage, has 268 native evangelists, 2000 baptized christians and has covered a field 400 miles by 200 miles. Mr. Johnston and Miss. Meester went to the C. E. M. after leaving the C.I.M. though Miss. Meester was later married to a state physician and is still living in the Congo.)

f. I wish to make a suggestion here that is again in a measure patterning after the C.E.M., although I am sure other mission Boards are working in a similar manner. It seems to me that our field ought to be definitely and accurately charted and mapped. This could be done first by preparing charts working out from each station. Eventually these station charts would be extensive enough so that they could be pieced together and we would have a map of the entire territory for which we have assumed responsibility. On this map there ought to be located every village in the territory with the approximate population, streams, roads, paths, etc. Such a map published to the Board would be of great help to all who are doing deputation work in the home field, and ought to be a great help and satisfaction to the missionaries on the field. It should have all the villages in which no work is yet done as well as those in which we are doing work. It is even possible that the state or other individuals already have maps that would be a great help in making our own. Whatever the method of securing it, I would like to suggest that the mission undertake to prepare accurate maps covering our entire territory.

g. I have been thinking much about our Training Standard and how it is affecting our work. In the conversations at Mukedi, Nyanga and Kalumba, the question was raised as to whether it is not possible to have such high standards of training for our teachers that are sent out that it is quite impossible to train any so that they will reasonably attain to that standard, and as a final result there will be few teachers sent out. We all believe thoroughly in a better training for both our missionaries and native workers. I am absolutely in harmony with you in thinking that sixth or seventh grade

with an additional two years of special training is by no means too much for a native teacher. In the same connection I may say that a complete College training with additional special training in distinct lines of work is not too much for the American missionaries. In making this latter statement I might add that I feel that I personally as well as the other ministering brethren on the Mission Board could well have more years of special training for our work and we would still not be too highly trained for the tasks that ~~are~~ are ours. The fact remains, however, that many of us are trying to carry on in spite of our consciousness of insufficient training. Having this in mind, I venture to make a suggestion that might insure having a sufficient number of natives each year to send out to open schools in villages to which we ought to go, without lowering our standard for training for them.

Maintain the standard as adopted by the mission several years ago. The standard should not be lowered. We must face the fact, however, that in the effort to abide by the standard the missions have not been able to open work in new villages as should have been done. It is also all too evident that the work of many of the teachers is of a lower standard than it should be. Would it not be well, while we are maintaining our adopted standard as the ideal that we, in the meantime and until such a time as we are able to abide by that standard and still produce teachers, continue to send out teachers with more limited training and give them our fullest encouragement and close supervision in their work? Is it not true that the Mission Board frequently has sent to field missionaries who have had less training than it was felt they should have? The great need on the Field and the dearth of trained applicants has made this action necessary on the part of the Mission Board. Can the missionaries not profitably act in a similar manner when they deal with the problem of native evangelists and teachers? I am not enthused in making this suggestion though I am concerned about getting more native teachers to work.

h. It seems scarcely consistent to counsel economy when there seems to be so little money with which to work, but I feel impressed to give on word of caution. This is perhaps particularly inspired by one action taken at the conference relative to printing an edition of fifty books for language study. I hesitate to comment on this action for fear the comment will be interpreted as passing on the value of the material to be printed. That is entirely out of consideration in connection with what I wish to say. In the United States it is not considered profitable to print an edition if the number of copies wanted is below five hundred. The expense involved in the composition and printing is too great to count it wise to make the investment. I fail to see the wisdom in printing an edition such as the Conference decided to do. With the mimeograph and multigraph, of which there are now several on the mission, this smaller number of copies can quite easily be produced. Just before going to the Congo I was responsible for producing 200 copies of what may eventually be printed in a small pamphlet form. The Committee responsible for the work and which delegated me to do the reproducing, did not consider it profitable to print even the edition ~~in~~ of two hundred.

There is a particular reason why, even though ~~the~~ the expense item were not involved, I feel like giving further expression on this point. There is a terrible dearth of literature for use in the schools. One of the real tragedies in connection with our mission ~~is~~ is the fact that in some of the station schools and many of the village schools there is a terrible shortage of literature for the children. After making all the initial heavy expenses of sending the missionaries to the Congo and establishing the stations, it seems to me that the minor expense that would be involved in having an abundance of literature for use in the schools and the time of missionaries that will be involved, ought to be a first consideration. Is it not possible that there is neglect at the most strategic place - the point of contact with the native child? Make known to the home constituency the actual needs and I am certain you will find a responsive chord more quickly than along almost any other line. What I have mentioned relative to economy in the line of printing might perhaps be said relative to other lines. My general suggestion is that there is always need for careful guarding along this line. The gasoline engine, woodworking machine and dental outfit at Charlesville suggest that someone gave too little consideration along this line else these things would not be in the Congo.

i. I would also recommend that the missionaries be alert in securing data along two ~~lines~~ lines: In the first place there is the constant need for enlarging the missionaries vocabulary, and the gathering of new words could well be made a co-operative work with those who are working in the tribe and with the same language, readily exchanging lists of the new words found. It is my impression that all of you are zealous in the watch for

the new words, but I am wondering if the effort to pass them on to the other missionaries is as large and systematic as it ought to be. Could there not be a system of regular - say monthly - interchange of the new words that have been discovered? Possibly, however, this is provided for in some manner of which I did not learn.

The second line I wish to mention is the collecting of data relative to native history, beliefs, practises, etc. As rapidly as this is gotten it ought to be put into some suitable form and passed on to the Mission Board or some individual on the Field or Board who will put it into form in which it can be preserved and made of use to those who may follow after. There seems to have been a weakness in this respect on the part of the earlier missionaries. While always happy in the finding of new data and safely making note of it in their private diaries, it was allowed to remain there and others left to discover it also - if they could. This knowledge has been of help to the individuals who secured it but the new or later missionaries have been compelled to rediscover it or else remain ignorant, while the findings of the former folks could very reasonably have been passed on to them. We need much more of this material in print for both the home public, the Mission Board and the new folks who will become missionaries. They ought to get from literature many of the things for which the pioneers have paid a great price both in time and experience.

j. My last suggestion is that after all it is God who is the great source of all our supply in material things as well as spiritual power. We are not classed as a "faith mission" because we have a home organization and the assurance of a regular support. Is it not perhaps true that the fact that we have that "home constituency" makes us a little less dependent on God than we ought to be? You have exercised large faith in God in the past and, even though there have been times of testing for the mission, you have found that He never fails. You have adopted a larger program of service and are asking the Board for an increase in funds.

I am sure it will not be necessary for me to suggest that you cannot reasonably expect these larger things unless it pleases our God to supply them. With a sympathetic Mission Board and "home constituency" and a God with unlimited resources, I am confident that if we are all earnest in our endeavors and faithful to our God that nothing will be too hard for Him to do and no program too large for Him to prosper and bless. May the Lord bless you as you tell Him of your needs and continue in your labors of love.